



## He Knows How to Pick ‘em

It might do us all well to consider John Conte’s picks a little more carefully these days. The Oceanside public handicapper who has been picking for Suffolk OTB for quite some time was the first place winner of the 2008 Daily Racing Form/NTRA Handicapping Championship in January bringing home a whopping \$500,000 purse.

His final pick of the two day event, a 22-1 long shot at Santa Anita named *Raiding Party*, catapulted him passed the ten contenders ahead of him landing him in first place by a lead of \$3.50 in his imaginary bankroll. Conte will automatically be entered in the 2009 contest at the Red Rock in Las Vegas as the defending champion.

Suffolk OTB proudly honored Mr. Conte recently at its headquarters in Hauppauge where he received a certificate of congratulations from President and CEO Jeffrey Casale, Vice President Marietta Seaman and the SROTB Board of Directors. You can read an extended story about John’s success on our website.

## This Train Doesn’t Stop There

If the MTA’s plan to cut \$54 million in costs proceeds as proposed, horseracing fans who ride the rail to Belmont Park will have to find another way to get there as this service would cease on all but Belmont Stakes Day. NYRA representatives attended a recent public hearing on the issue to voice their opposition. Spokesperson Joanne Adams said “eliminating service to the Belmont Park train station would undermine New York State’s mandate for NYRA to promote racing and increase attendance at Belmont Park.” Several internet sites can be reached through “Save the Train to Belmont” for updates and information.

## Jockey Reality



It was only a matter of time before a television reality show found its way to horseracing. The series, *Jockeys*, began airing on the Animal Planet channel in February on Fridays at 9pm. With two episodes back-to-back each night, you may be able to catch a few episodes before it ends. The show chronicles the worlds of seven jockeys (Mike Smith, Jon Court, Alex Solis, Aaron Gryder, Chantel Sutherland, Joe Talamo and Kayla Stra) on the California circuit from the jockey room to the finish line. If you haven’t caught the series, and the station chooses to rerun it, it’s an interesting watch.



**Suffolk OTB generated almost \$2.3 million dollars**  
in non-tax revenue for Suffolk County in 2008.  
*Suffolk OTB makes all Suffolk residents winners!*

March 2009



From the President's desk ....

Spring is returning and none too soon. Winter weather caused closures throughout the first part of 2009 and many race cards suffered. Suffolk OTB strives to bring you the best racing available and apologizes for track cancellations beyond our control.

Suffolk OTB has joined with the other OTB regions in support of a state legislative change allowing us to open our doors on Palm Sundays. Assemblyman Robert Barra of Lynbrook, member of the Assembly Racing & Wagering Committee, sees this as an "easy thing to do to raise more revenue." Although a welcome plus in these difficult times, it's also an extra day to bring you your favorite sport.

To those of you who helped with our letter writing campaign - THANK YOU! In one week we collected over 2,100 letters of support from our employees and their families and friends, retirees and customers. You've greatly helped us to have our voice heard in Albany on important issues facing the financial future of Suffolk OTB. Thank you for your time, consideration and loyal support!

Jeffrey A. Casale  
President/CEO

## Nicanor's First Time Out

Ridden by Edgar Prado, *Nicanor*, a beautiful bay colt and full brother to *Barbaro*, made his debut at Gulfstream Park on January 31<sup>st</sup>. After stumbling from the gate, being bumped, grabbing his left quarter and moving up to 5<sup>th</sup> place at the half mile, *Nicanor* dropped back to finish 10<sup>th</sup> in a field of 12 in the one mile maiden.

Grabbing a quarter generally results in a cut when the rear foot oversteps and hits the front foot, so the colt now has some healing to do.

A third brother, *Lentenor*, remains in training at Stephens Thoroughbreds in Florida probably through April or May. Michael Matz, who trains both colts, has not released future plans for either.

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## Slots Help Horses Breed

Know who has the lowest fertility rate among farm animals? The horse. With a conception rate of 66% the horse lags well behind the 95-98% rate for cattle, sheep and pigs. In fairness, much of this is due to man-made selection and pairing which reduces the gene pool size.

But maybe all is not lost. Pennsylvania has boasted a better than 31% increase in mares bred in 2008 - and the reason? ... slot machines!

The coffers of the Pennsylvania state breeding fund more than doubled in the first year after Philadelphia Park opened the state's first racino and could reach \$20 million this year. The fund, which is supported through the racino, also distributes breeder and stallion awards, purses for PA-bred stakes and overnight races and purse bonuses for PA-breds that finish in the top three in open company. In addition to increasing the brood mare programs, the state's three thoroughbred tracks, Philadelphia Park, Penn National and Presque Isle Downs, have seen average purse distribution more than double.

Maybe their jackpot display should be three horses!

## Saratoga

NYRA and the Fasig-Tipton Company, the oldest North American thoroughbred auction firm, have announced a joint venture for the second weekend of this year's Saratoga season which begins on July 29<sup>th</sup>. They're calling it a "festival of racing" and hope to include numerous events including a jockey challenge, a speaker series and a handicapping contest.

## Highlights

Featured stakes races for the August 8-9 weekend are the Whitney Handicap, the Test, the Alfred G. Vanderbilt Handicap and the Honorable Miss Handicap, followed by Fasig-Tipton yearling sales on August 10-11. NYRA President Charles Hayward said he expects the combination of world-class racing with world-class yearlings to be an unforgettable experience.

The DRF, Newsday, Thoroughbred Times, bloodhorse.com and thoroughbredtimes.com were sources for some material contained in this newsletter

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